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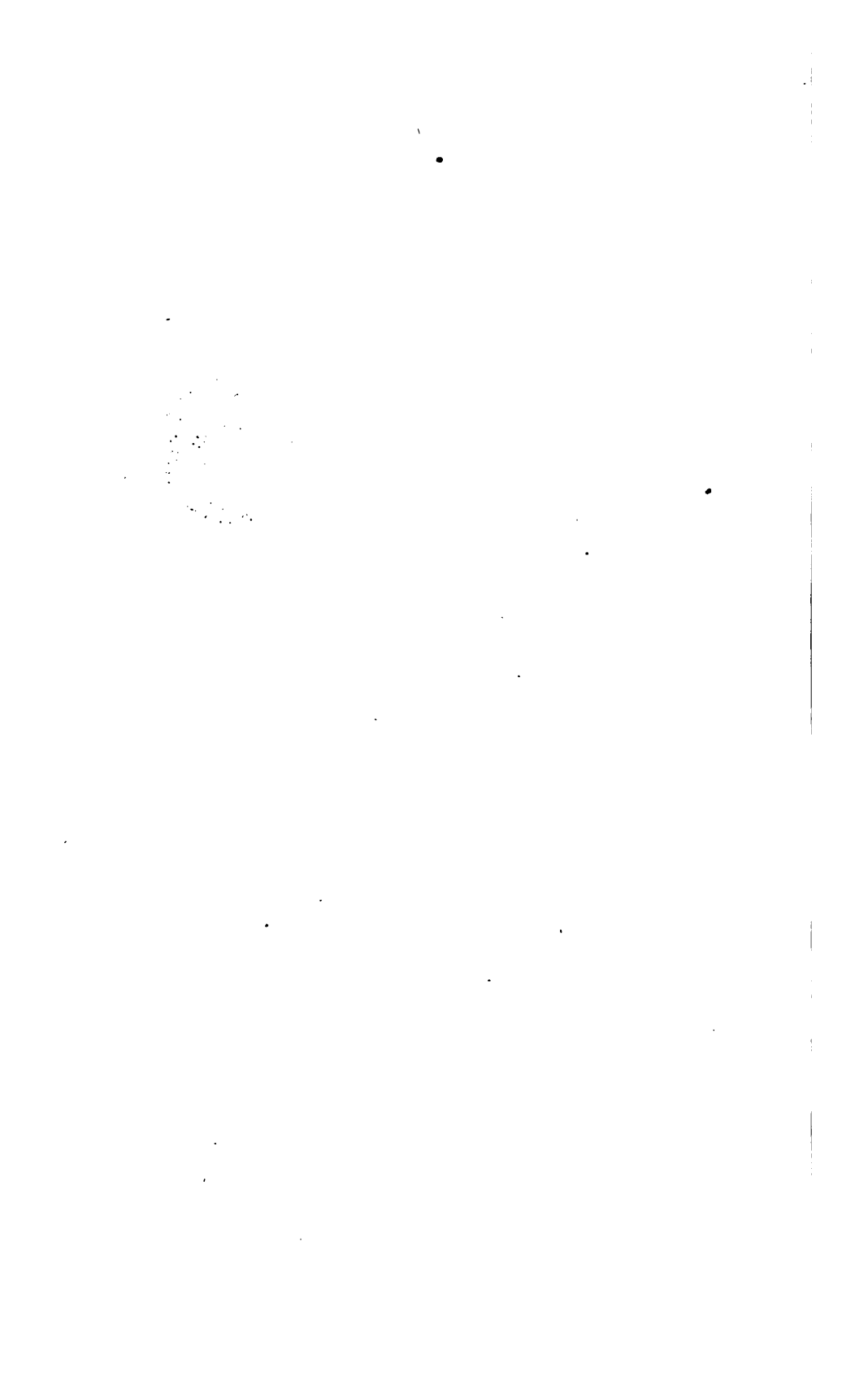


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DUTY

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IN RESPECT TO

UNLAWFUL WARS.

SECOND EDITION.

Price Sixpence.



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DUTY

OF THE

CHURCH OF ENGLAND

IN RESPECT TO

UNLAWFUL WARS.

A LETTER

TO A

RIGHT REVEREND PRELATE.

BY

DAVID URQUHART.

"Let every one that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity."

2 Tim. ii. 19.

SECOND EDITION.

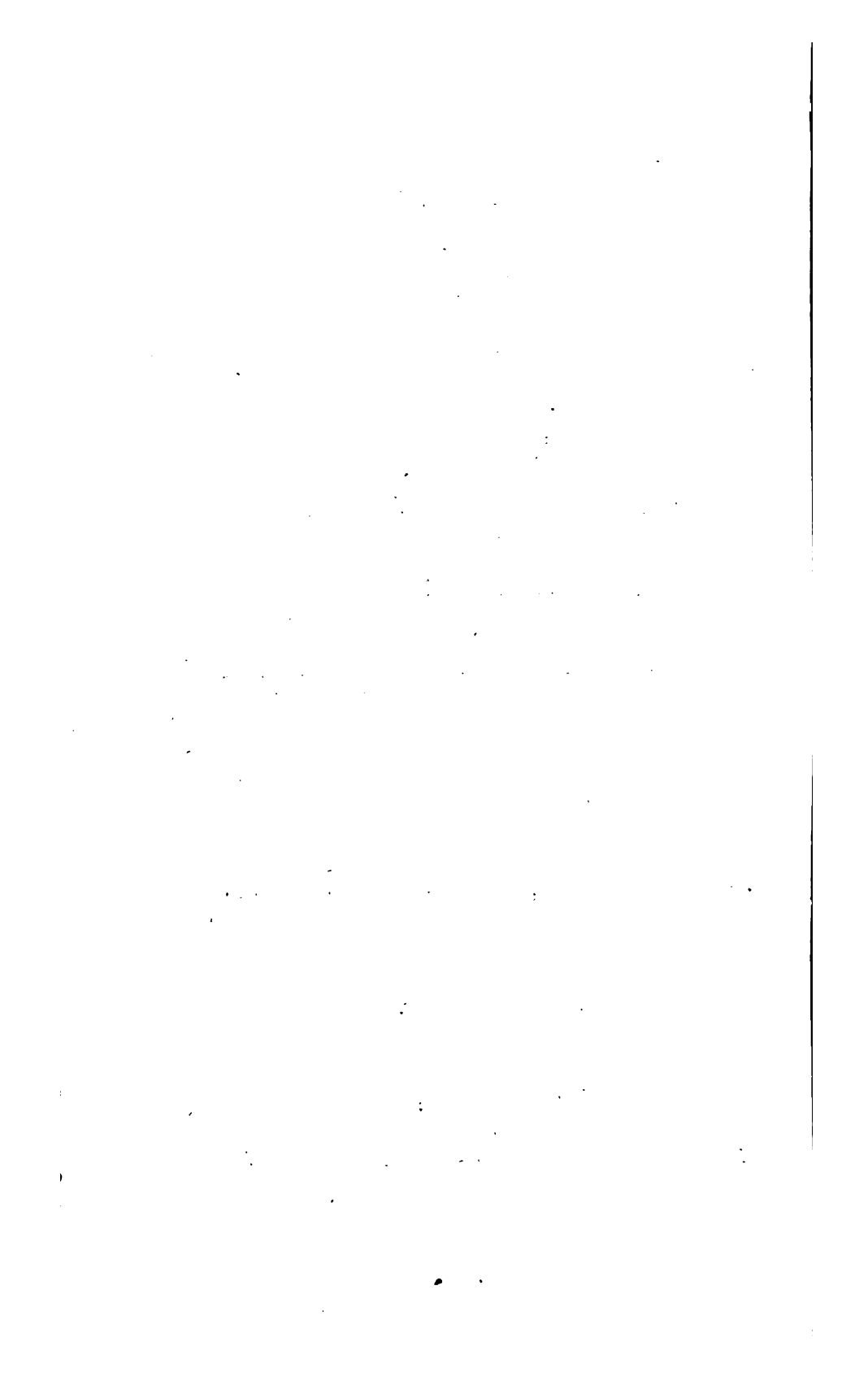
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MDCCCXLII.

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" I implore those Holy Prelates of our Religion to do away these iniquities from amongst us. Let them perform a lustration,—let them purify the house and the country from this sin."—*Lord Chatham.*

May 15th, 1842.

MY LORD,

I transmit herewith a letter* on our affairs in Central Asia, and I solicit your Lordship's attention to it before perusing this letter.

In the midst of perfect security an awful catastrophe has fallen upon us ; a conquest but yesterday won, has been wrested from us, and for the first time in the annals of Britain an army has been destroyed,—*not by a foe*, but by a people's hatred aroused by our crimes. This is not an insulated event ; it is a result of measures undertaken—not because of a necessity—but on the pretext of improving our condition, therefore is it appalling—not indeed by the loss which it inflicts, but by the characters which it reveals.

The external conduct of England, of which this event is a part, is unlike to the previous practice of England : no change of thoughts in the nation has led to this change of conduct in its Government—but the acts of the Government, suffered only because concealed, have been made the means of perverting the thoughts and ruining the character of the nation, which seeks to justify what it has endured. Thus at once are the affairs of the State ruined, and the sense of justice destroyed in its citizens.

Within ten years more diplomatic power has been put forth by England than in all the previous course of her existence in peace or war. In this new and inexplicable character there appears to be nothing too bold for her ambition—nothing too minute for her care ; exhibiting the spectacle of a nation convulsing by arms, or by diplomacy, the four quarters of the globe, assaulting the body or

* See enclosure, p. 27.

arousing the passions of almost every people on the face of the earth, while within it is divided and powerless, and wholly indifferent to the measures in which it is involved, the disasters which it suffers, or the crimes which it commits, and receiving as foreign news the knowledge of the acts which itself performs.

England is engaged in wars to oppose as an enemy in *Asia* that same foreign government which it calls her friend in *Europe*. She is engaged in leagues and treaties subversive of public rights* and of England's most essential and historic objects to advance the designs in Europe of a government against whose influence we are waging wars in Asia! Of this policy the disaster in Cabool is the result, and ought to be the explanation. It shows that England is both infatuated and unjust—that is, that amongst us is effaced the knowledge and the practice of civil and religious duties. Public injuries and evils have fallen upon us because there has ceased to be in England a man conscious of what is just, and indignant at that which is criminal. But this danger is not for England only—it is for the human race—for England the shield of the weak has now become the weapon of the assassin, and in bringing calamity upon herself she threatens the universe with incalculable woes. This danger exists for England and the world, because Englishmen have ceased to know their duties to their fellow men and to their God.

This infatuation might hitherto have been ascribed to the appearances of security and of triumph. These are now dispelled; disaster and retribution have overtaken us. Here then was a chance—the last chance of safety. This judgment, if it sufficed not to open our eyes—might have sufficed to arrest our steps—but :—

While the world (which England has peopled with enemies) rings with the penalty which has fallen upon our ambition—while this island and its dependencies are filled with anxious doubts—while thousands of families are clad in mourning from the announcement of this, which is but the first of our misfortunes—the Senate of Britain sits heedless and unmoved! Men nightly engaged in anxious debate upon every, the most trivial incident, wholly exclude from their deliberations the disaster which has fallen upon England as wholly as they have excluded from their previous care the events which have led to it. Can any dangers menacing from without be so terrible as such a state existing within? In this universal doubt not a single man is found even to dissent; no man proposes investigation of the past; no man speaks of expiation for crime

* Treaty of 15th July, 1840, with murder and piracy perpetrated under it on the coast of Syria; and the Convention of 13th of July, 1841.

which the nation has committed; no restraining prudence; no habits of business; no sense of honesty or of shame; no traditions of public law; no instinct of preservation; and once again the Senate and people plunge madly forward in the fatal course where they had paused for a moment, with this difference, that what formerly was suffered in ignorance is now re-perpetrated consciously. We are no longer instruments but agents, and a policy which was on the point of being abandoned, because all men had pronounced it to be "*insane*," is persevered in because it is proved to be *disastrous*!

Has then the loss of sight destroyed the faculty of repentance, and is the time come when "he that is unjust is to be unjust still?"

The results just obtained in Persia and Afghanistan are exactly the reverse of the expectations held out three years ago, and of the objects proposed as the end of this policy by the Minister of the Crown, and accepted by the British Parliament. These results are however exact confirmations of what I then stated* as the inevitable consequences of that very policy. Events have therefore come in regard to the matters of the highest national concernment, to justify the judgment of a single individual against that of a whole people. In addition then to the gravity of the circumstances which must arouse all men to reflection and inquiry, I feel that I have obtained a claim to be heard, and therefore am justified in seeking in a more direct manner than I have ever done before to call to these subjects the attention of men in England, who by the powers of their mind, or the eminence of their station, might contribute by intelligence to the safety of the state, as otherwise by ignorance they must contribute to its fall. But to whom shall we turn? There is no man who feels that he is guilty in the crimes of his people.—There is then no patriot. How can affairs be rightly managed when no one respects justice—and how can the spirit of justice live when no one knows facts? We have plunged into crime such as this country never committed before—such as no country ever before has been guilty of—not crime because passion impelled—not crime even because advantage was to be gained, but murder without an impulse—without a pretext—screened by no form, cloaked by no fallacy—murder on a suppliant! and no man in England mourns for England! This in the midst of the teachings of religion—this in the midst of the cry of philanthropy and of universal peace—this by a civilizing state—by a people spreading its influence over the world by the benefits of commerce, literature, and religion. To whom then are we, at once suffering by the fact

* Transactions in Central Asia.

and appalled by the consequences, to look, for useful energy or at least for sympathy in shame, grief and indignation?—if not to those who, by their office, have been separated from the ways and deeds of politicians, and who by their duties are commissioned for the preventing and the reproving of transgression? And if among them any one man be touched by the prospect of this Empire's fall—if any one can be moved by freedom and civilization, defiled by its deeds—by the religion of Christ desecrated by England's crimes, then for us all might spring anew the sources of hope. The single man who so sees and feels, as a Watchman on the tower—may save the sleeping city.

The thoughts that have greatly influenced the fate of men have been generated in single bosoms; and seeing what England has, by a few individuals, been led to do, without her knowledge or her will for her own injury, what might not one man do, who seeing his country's danger, aroused himself to avert it?

Looking therefore on the danger as existing as yet only in our minds, and not in our circumstances, I make this appeal to your Lordship in a manner that I have made to no other fellow-citizen, because I have found united in you in a higher degree, than I have known in any other, that character and those traditions which seem to me to qualify you, if any man in England, at the present day, can be so qualified, to arrest the decay of the State, while preventing the destruction of the Church, which can be prevented only by restoring to it usefulness—usefulness in averting national ruin by denouncing and resisting national crime.

The abstinence of the Church, from interest in the public welfare, is to me the most appalling feature of the times, because the sanction of the Church must be given to wrong unless exerted to resist it. But, as this arises not out of an intention of injury, but a misconception of duty, and therefore, if it be possible, to remove the misconception, the Church may be brought back to the consciousness of the duties which it has to perform, and therefore will its sanction be withdrawn from evil, and its power exerted to resist it.

The enemy by whom England is assailed, is one which, by the union of a proselytizing faith with a revolutionizing policy, is at once a spiritual and a carnal foe. Whilst overthrowing crowns it undermines creeds—and that by the same intellectual superiority, which enables it to plant in the bosom of unconscious churches, as of heedless governments, the seeds of discord, of bitterness, of hatred, and of war—all becoming its victims, because each has been its dupe. This ought to have aroused, more especially the minds of churchmen, to energy and knowledge, and to a sense of the con-

nection of the well-being of the Church and State; were it only by the fact, that the enemy of the one is the enemy of the other.

In the conversations which I had with you, more than a quarter of a year ago, I, for the first time, expressed to a churchman my sense of the duties of the Church (and it must have been deep and solemn for me to have given utterance to any thoughts on such a subject in your presence). I then expressed my conviction, that the Church* was responsible for all public errors, through which alone, in a free State, there could be division, and for a powerful empire there could be danger. I further said, it was the duty of the Church to denounce public crime—you admitted that it was so, but only when the case was clear and the necessity evident. Feeling this to be the real danger for any man's conscience, as for any country's condition, I laboured to shew that it was the duty of the Church, as that of the Judge, to make clear what was doubtful, and thereby to bring truth into evidence—that it was the part of the Church's higher intelligence to clear mists away from the eyes of men. I observed that complications, in public as well as in private affairs, could arise only through dereliction of duty—that their existence was no justification for enduring them, but a necessity for removing them—that no man could be a citizen who could not understand his country, and therefore complication of affairs, which means confusion of mind, that is discord of opinions, extinguished citizenship. I further said, that the attempt to complicate affairs, or to suppress knowledge respecting them, could only arise from designs in the individual governors that were dangerous, or from incapacity that might be even more so; that for the Nation enquiry became necessary as it became difficult, for there could be no safety, and indeed, no positive knowledge of danger unless these complications were removed; no sense of right and wrong in any man while they subsisted, and no duty, political or religious, performed by any man who did not labour to remove them. I said, that the Church was not merely bound by its light and faculties to perform this task, but that it held its possessions and its authority in the State solely on the condition of performing it; that, as its spiritual authority lay in the reproofing of sin, so its temporal power had sprung and could only spring from the restraining of transgression in nations against other nations, and from resisting public wrong in the rulers of nations against their people.

Since the period when these conversations occurred, this subject has been ever present with me. To this point do I turn again and again as the last and only refuge. So prompted, while encouraged

* The word Church is here applied, in its present acceptation, to the Clergy. The Church is of course the people.

by the indulgence with which you received my words, I now submit to you the following considerations, tending to show that the propositions that churchmen have nothing to do with public transactions, and that Bishops are dispensed by their spiritual character from the obligations attached to their seat in Parliament, are in opposition to the laws of the land, and to the conditions upon which the Church possesses either property or power.

The expression used to convey the thought is "Churchmen have nothing to do with politics." The introduction of this observation into our public judgment, corresponds with the introduction of the Greek term into our language, with a sense attached to it the very reverse of its value in Greek. The commencing error sought and introduced a foreign term to misapply it, and it has lived through that misapplication. "Politician" and "citizen" are, in the languages from which they are drawn, synonymous terms; and if the latter term were placed wherever the first is used, the confusion would be removed and the error dispelled; for no man could say "Churchmen have nothing to do with citizenship," or "Churchmen ought not to be citizens." The word "politician" then falsifies the perception of the most important of our duties, yet is it continually in the mouths of men. The difference between the words "citizen" and "politician" marks the difference between England at the two periods when they were introduced.

In the word "Politics" there is at once the original idea, "knowledge of public affairs;" and there is the recent English idea of "factionous contentions." We thus give to ourselves a common term for right and wrong—for duty and for sin—and thereby extinguish sense. If politics be understood as designating faction, no man can be a politician and a Christian; but if politics be the knowledge of our duties as citizens, there can be no Christian who is not a politician. If the churchman who says he takes no part in politics, meant that he had ceased to belong to a faction, (to which he can only cease to belong by being freed from the errors which cause the division,) then indeed would this be a word of hope: but, alas! he only means to deny his responsibility as a reasoning being.

A nation's character is perverted by its acts, but before its acts can be such as to degrade, the mind of each individual must have been perverted by its common tongue. It is when errors are thus conveyed in single words that the lips of a nation become unclean.

When doubts arise as to the duties of men, our first business is to appeal to the past. There alone can we find the line from which we have deviated; and the original of the state from which we have changed. When the use of powers are called in question, it is our duty to return to the conditions on which these powers were

granted, and the obligations under which they have been accepted ; for so alone can we regain either the knowledge of facts, or the sense of duty. These are the old ways of the constitution upon which those who seek to preserve it must take their stand. In respect to the church these ancient ways must be broad, and their foundations deep ; and if we apply ourselves to clearing away the encumbrances of latter times, we can have no difficulty in finding them, and no doubt in judging of them.

Bishops have seats in Parliament. If it had not been the duty of churchmen to attend to politics, these privileges could not have been possessed. Occupying this station it is their duty to attend to public affairs.

Prelates are members of this Council either in consequence of temporalities which as churchmen they hold, or as representing the church itself in the General Council of the nation. They sit in both capacities. Peers by tenure in right of their baronies : representatives of one of the Three Estates of the realm. Therefore are they doubly responsible for the performance of political duties.

In the Saxon times the chief clergy were members of the Wittenagemote, and they were administrators of justice. The diocese corresponded with the earldom ; and in the subsequent Norman period, as in that of the Saxon,* was established the joint jurisdiction of bishop and of earl.

The bishops and mitred abbots were held to perform military service in like manner as the thanes. There is no instance on record of lands conferred upon the church in Saxon times except under the obligation of the *Trinoda necessitas*, constituting that property directly a feudal tenure ; feuds (beneficia) not being held under a proprietor on condition of paying rent, but being held of the State on the condition of performing service to it. These services were twofold : the administration of justice, and the defence of the community. No feudal property can be honestly held except on the performance of these duties, or at least on the fulfilment to the community of the objects for which the service was instituted. These were in those times the only objects for which Government was established ; for which powers were delegated, and for the performance of which benefices were appropriated. This is the wondrous bond of that strength which the children of such forefathers

* The bishop was co-equal with the earl in his respective capacities of judge and of baron ; and when the power of the earls was destroyed by standing Committees of the General Parliament, which were appointed for the special administration of justice, namely, the Privy Council, the Courts of Exchequer and of Common Pleas, the church was deprived of a large portion of its rights and influence.

pretend to revere, but do not comprehend. This is the basis of the feudal system, existing equally in the Saxon and Norman periods; found equally among all the Gothic races; and indeed among every race, whose ancient, simple, and powerful characters have not been entirely effaced; converting the possession of property into a bond of protection for the community, and into a duty of knowledge for the possessor. No wonder that great fabrics were raised with small materials by such men. No wonder that they have left to us monuments of wisdom and of justice; although in the origin these seeds were planted by bandits and by pirates. It was to this obligation to serve the State in exchange for the fiefs and benefices conferred, that the phenomenon is intelligible of the absence in those periods of taxes, the holders of the benefices being bound to the performance of the entire service of the Government within and without; the office of governing being distributed as it were to the parts, instead of being concentrated in a general executive; so that the mind of each citizen was made alert, and in each citizen's breast was produced the type of the Unity of the State, by each being possessed of the entire knowledge requisite for its conduct.

But originally the feud was not the property of the soil—it was usufruct of a portion of its produce. Spiritual benefices have retained somewhat of this character. The temporal peers converting their feuds into possessions, leave the nation to find other resources for its Government. Spiritual Peers retaining the beneficial interest conferred, hold themselves discharged from all care of the commonweal.

Thus, in ascending to the earliest period of our nation, we find common obligations imposed upon spiritual and temporal possessors of benefices and property. No change in these respects took place at the Norman period. The Church then held nearly one-half of the manorial honours of England—that is, 28,000 out of 60,000—and Bishops and Abbots were ranked as Barons; not according to their spiritual gradations, but by the character of holding, and the number of knight's fees; and under the above stated conditions of this feudal service was this rank obtained and this property possessed.

The Bishops are therefore Barons of the Kingdom and of the King, exactly as the Peers not spiritual.

It is superfluous to continue the chain of evidence, the origin is sufficient, and nothing can be more distinct than that the Spiritual Peers hold upon the above-stated conditions their baronies; and as Barons were bound to the full political service of the other Barons of the realm.

But, independently of the rights and duties of prelates as holders

in chief of the Crown, they are the principal representatives of the Church—that is, one of the estates of the realm. In the Saxon times, and during two centuries after the Norman period, there were but two Estates, of which the Church was the chief. Then a third Estate arose, and so essential was the presence of the Church even after it was only one of the three, that on occasions of the Clergy absenting themselves, Acts of Parliament were reversed, and judgment in capital cases rescinded, on the ground that the Church had not been represented.*

It was the Papal See that sought to curtail the authority of the English Church, by preventing its dignitaries from becoming possessed of high offices of the Crown, and restricting their judicial functions;—by the first, to restrain the excessive power of the Church of England, which had become at one time alarming to the See of Rome;—and by the second, to establish the general Canon Law or Roman Legislation, and power as paramount to the customs and common law of the separate kingdoms of Christendom. It was the Puritans that revived, as a dogma, the maxim which Rome had with a special object enforced in England—the alienation of churchmen from their civil duties. But then the Puritans were justified in reproaching the Church for not performing its duties, and they did not see that the error was to be corrected by enforcing the performance of their duty—not by endeavouring to denationalize a portion, and the most revered portion of their fellow citizens.

While the Church still acted as a Church—a Member of the State—it did not, on occasions of grave and essential difference from the laity, abdicate its power of judging;—it neither resigned its privilege nor its conscience, but after protestation withdrew from the Parliament. In those days it could not have entered into the head of man to conceive that one of the Estates of the Realm should be irresponsible for the acts of the Government, or passive in their enactment.

The fulfilment of the conditions upon which lay as well as spiritual benefices were conferred requires not only acts to be performed, but knowledge to be possessed—the administration of justice requires knowledge of that which is just and unjust. The defence of the State could be no service unless its affairs were understood. If these were complicated endangered, or irretrievably sacrificed by antecedent errors or unheeded malversation, defence might be rendered impossible, even before danger was apparent. Those commissioned to provide the practical means for defence had to see that this necessity was not needlessly or criminally incurred by injurious acts and unjust pretensions. This service, therefore, involved super-

* The inferior clergy were represented by procurators.

vision of international relations, and such was the early practice of England.*

The feudal Monarch acted in the name of the Barons. In their presence every international compact was concluded, and every international measure decided upon; they not merely signed but became guarantees for international treaties; and even so late as the period of Henry the Eighth were treaties with foreign powers ratified by the three Estates of Parliament—the Prelates, the Barons, and the Commons; and in the original of our State, when internal affairs were committed to a few, the external, that is, the general interests were decided on by the whole people.†

The Church's obligations then, as deduced from their tenures, is to understand those two points of government—the rights of man and man as established by internal law—and the rights of nation in respect to nation; that is, international law, which again is based on the municipal law of each country, and on the sense of that which is just, common to all countries. If in regard to the first their supervision and intervention is not requisite, seeing that care has been taken to secure integrity in the administration of the law,

* This supervision of the foreign relations of the land by its estates, and the participation of those estates in all international acts, was the practice of England down to the Revolution; and again, in the Act of Settlement, which placed the present family on the throne, so much of the thoughts of ancient times was preserved as to limit the prerogative of the Crown regarding peace and war, to the defence of the hereditary dominions of the Crown of the three kingdoms, and requiring, in regard to all international transactions, the pre-knowledge and supervision of the Privy Council; fixing again upon the members of that Council the sense of responsibility by requiring the signature to all decisions of the assenting members.

† So among the Greeks, when internal affairs were decided on by a Senate, diplomatic affairs were brought before the public assembly. There, were the ambassadors of foreign states introduced to expound their missions, and those of different states to debate with each other. To conceal diplomatic transactions from him, or from those who have internal power constitutionally in their hands, is to ruin at once the Constitution and the Community. A free State that neglects diplomatic transactions cannot be safe; and when in a free State diplomatic transactions are kept secret, the Constitution is subverted.

The House of Commons has gradually come to be the Sovereign of England; the Minister is therefore the servant of that House, and that servant conceals from his master the knowledge of what he is about. Information is withheld because negotiations are pending, so that *what was a reproach* to an Athenian in the time of Philip, is a *reason* for an Englishman in the time of Nicholas. By this we are not changed from a free to a despotic state, but the Constitution that we have is rendered worthless, and the preservation of the forms of Freedom serves but to subvert the objects for which it is prized; and how easy for any man of weight or consideration to prevent this wrong.

there remains then but one of the original burdens for them to bear, by which this property is held—the maintenance of international law (diplomacy)—and this, while a matter touching our very existence as a nation, and the moral character of each man, is a matter wholly neglected. So that the whole power of this empire as bearing on other States, and re-acting on itself, is entrusted to the keeping of a single man, filling the office of protector of our national rights and interests—not because of gradual advancement through a course of study and service—not designated by a monarch's choice, or elevated by a people's confidence—but who attains that office as a subordinate one because belonging to the accidental majority of the House of Commons, the leaders of which, in latter times have, in violation of the Laws and Constitution of the Land, formed themselves into a secret association, called Cabinet or Closet, carrying on the government without the knowledge of the great Council of the Realm.*

The disregard of law and their neglect of duties by the rest of the nation adds, if anything can add, to the obligations upon the Church to perform its part. For this which concerns all, which is the first of necessities as well as the first of duties, it is not only that every class has been negligent, that every section of the community has been indifferent, but that each special body has itself a reason for disregarding the common welfare. The lawyer, absorbed in his professional occupation, confines his mind and restricts his judgment to that portion of public questions which is designated legal.† The soldier conceives himself restrained by military subordination from understanding what is right and what is wrong, and imagines himself justified by the orders of a superior in the perpetration of any crime.‡ The man belonging to a party is justified to himself in dis-

* There is no judgment more solemnly formed, or more completely established in my mind than this—that England's life cannot be prolonged unless she has a few young men brought up to the study of diplomacy. This will be the first result of any useful attention given to these subjects, and without it the most fortunate accidents will not be of any use. Were there in England statesmen or members of the diplomatic body conscious of that which is understood by the subordinates of a Russian Legation, instantaneously every danger, as every difficulty, would cease for England.

† The Roman citizen was lawyer, priest, judge, soldier, censor. Rising to the highest he re-descended again to the lowest offices of the State. In the mind and character and practice of each were contained, therefore, the whole of the parts that constituted the citizen. Amongst us they are subdivided. How then can we have knowledge, and how can we be citizens!

‡ Rome has left us the example of the severest discipline, joined with the strictest justice.

The Roman soldier was not called upon to draw his sword by the orders ema-

regarding things that are not interesting as connected with party warfare, and even the body set apart to teach other men their duty have a reason specially belonging to their caste for disregarding duties peculiarly their own.

Herein lies corruption, that is the decomposition of a state, the parting as it were of the flesh from the bones. The greatest of philosophers describes a decaying state as one in which all men have many opinions, but no man has any judgment. Where many can perform well separate duties, but where none have a sense of that which is pre-eminently just and useful.

Every law of the land bears the designation of the Lords spiritual as that of a power enacting it,* and it is the first of the three powers rehearsed. Who can be expected to care for the public weal, when the first in authority and in station, as governing the State, and as framing laws for its government, declare themselves restrained by duty from understanding those things with the execution of which they are charged, and for the due performance of which they have been beneficially endowed? For the enactment of a law in order to regulate the minutest concern, the concurrent force of the assent and the authority of the king and the three estates are requisite, yet such is the condition to which England is brought, that the violation of all law human and divine—the trampling on the most sacred rights and duties—the destruction of the dearest interests of the land—the overthrow of the Constitution itself have been perpetrated without any form of law whatever. To declare an unjust war against one half of the human race, to involve this Empire in national murder, to entail upon it the loss of tens of thousands of lives, in retribution for that murder, has required not so much as the formalities requisite for cutting a road or building a bridge. Mere ignorance of what is right and wrong—the mere consciousness in each individual of his

nating from the will of a minister or the decision of a Cabinet—he was not called even upon the authority of the chief of the Executive Government, sanctioned by the most solemn forms and announced in the most public manner. The Roman soldier drew his sword only after the Senate had decided upon the war—after that decision was referred to a body of religious judicature (the *Fecial College*) after that body had addressed itself to the Foreign Government with whom existed the grounds of quarrel—after it had sought in vain redress and had made solemn proclamation of the war throughout the Roman State, and to the people constituted enemies by the act. Thus by respect for the forms in which alone justice can live were united the severity of Roman discipline, with the integrity of Roman citizenship.

* In early times the Monarch enacted in his own person “I.” The signatures of the Barons being added under the words “his testibus.” In the troubled times of King John, when he could not assemble a sufficient number of barons to give authority to edicts, he had recourse to the word “*vx*,” omitting the signature of the barons.

being unable to unravel the complication in which the country is involved has given the full value of the direct efficiency and support of the Parliament and the Constitution to these crimes and to these injuries. Those by whom they have been perpetrated knew their nation sufficiently well to reckon on entire impunity for any crime, when the detection or exposure of it required integrity, vigour and knowledge—that is patriotism.

The Bishops, excluded from judicial and executive functions, are men elevated to the station they occupy by pre-eminent qualifications—they have neither been absorbed in technical labours, nor engaged in the contests of action—their faculties have been exerted in a life of well doing to their fellow-men, in the study of their own responsibilities and duties, since they are raised above their fellow-men to be their guardians and their guides—to these members of the High Court of Parliament, the nation smitten and stunned must now look.—In them must reside, if any where it is to be found, integrity to resist the contamination of the times—courage to denounce the crimes of the powerful.

But no duties can be performed unless knowledge is possessed, and the Church, in order to be able to see what its duties are, must at least possess one man who has made himself acquainted with the affairs of England, who has mastered the common rights of nations, the stipulations that bind them, and who has traced the deviations by which alone confusion has been produced, and danger engendered. He will know how and what evil England has done—what injustice she has suffered—what she has perpetrated—then will judgment come forth with power, and the voice of Him who declares the truth, will be that at once of Judge and of Saviour.

Without this study every man wanders in the dark.

But had there been honest men in England it would have required no unravelling of diplomatic complications, to protect us against guilt and danger. Men who had the feeling of justice would at once have detected acts which were unjust, and arrested them. An honest nation can no more be betrayed by its own leaders, than it can be injured by the injustice of other states.

There is nothing that can injure England, save her own deed—there is no deed of hers injurious to herself, that has not first been unjust to others—there is no confusion in men's minds, save when injustice has been committed. There are states that do profit by injustice—it belongs to England to do justice for her own benefit.

It is the great honor and fortune of England, that she suffers by doing what is unjust, and, therefore, until the infatuations of these latter days, the whole care and thoughts of England have been

given to maintain the rights of nations and to prevent powerful states from injuring others. England, therefore, presents in her interests the deepest obligation of a public and national kind, to be upright in her dealings : and she presents in her practice the foulest and most criminal deeds, public murder without any forms, without any pretexts, committed without the knowledge of the people by whose authority they are perpetrated.* Our dangers therefore, are our crimes. Let the crimes be repudiated and the danger is averted. To whom does this task belong but to the Church ? If the Church raises its voice and hand against guilt and crime it saves the State, and not saving the State, it yields its sanction to guilt and crime. The Church from the protector becomes the destroyer of the State. Its sanction and authority are employed to dissolve the bonds of charity and truth by which the State is united, and changed itself in character, it becomes the curse of the land, whose blessing it was instituted to be.

The State has grown by the Church's culture. The Church instead of growing with that growth has dwindled away. By comparing its present with its past thoughts and conduct, the cause of that decay appears. Former Prelates exercised their faculties and their authority to ensure the just conduct of public affairs, thereby preserving peace, that is to say, preserving our rights from being violated, and preventing this nation from violating the rights of others ; and when recourse to arms became inevitable, those Prelates bore the public burdens entailed by war, and shared with their flock the dangers of the field. The Barons of the Church to-day, who inherit their benefices and their rights from such predecessors, no longer contribute by their property, nor bear arms on their persons for the common defence, and further they cease to possess that knowledge of public affairs which would enable them to prevent the occurrence of wars not necessary, and they have thrown away the right, and disregarded the duty to arrest and denounce wars not just. Concurrently with this deterioration of the character and functions of the Church has arisen, and now is daily waxing stronger a spirit of change which is not a restoration of the past, but an aggravation of the evils from which it springs. The Church become powerless, is menaced with change ; that change, tending not to impose but to withdraw responsibilities, and the course adopted by the Church to resist that change, is not the fulfilment but the abandonment of duty. It is indeed a lamentable thing when it is

* Russia gains for herself when she does injustice upon others. England's profit lies in doing justice to others. England has united herself to Russia. This fact alone explains that England has become the reverse to all nations and to herself of all she has been, and of all she ought to be.

necessary to refer to the past, because a nation must have lost the faculty of distinguishing good from evil when it has let slip from it that which is good and taken to itself that which is evil. There is still something more lamentable, which is this—that a nation should be in such a state, that those who watch its decay dread its senses being awakened to the consciousness of the misuse of power from the conviction of its inability to understand, and thereby to remedy the wrong from which it suffers. In such a time restoration can only spring from those in whose hands the misused authority is already placed.

When I reflect on what the Church might do at this hour—what it might prevent—how at scarcely more than the cost of a mental and moral effort, it might reclaim England, and become at once its guide, protection, and authority,—I have no difficulty in comprehending how that power of the Church which dazzles through the mists of nearly two centuries, was merited and obtained.

No country has produced such remarkable churchmen as England, and we have received their names as those of ambitious and dangerous men. When monks and priests could overawe the mightiest monarchs and restrain the iron Barons by whom the soil of this Island was conquered, the Church must have proved itself worthy of confidence. Whence such confidence? can Nations rise save by the comprehension of affairs? And who amongst a rising state can be powerful save those that understand them best?

Subsequently the ambition of the Church had to be resisted. This only proves how great had been its original character and services, since so great had been its power. Power possessed may be misused, but power is never obtained by violence—it is voluntarily yielded.—In times less great than these, the Church held duties (now termed political as opposed to spiritual) to be a more solemn trust and obligation weighing upon it than upon the other members of the State. It coveted the administration of justice—it applied itself to legislation as an institute of education and morals—it interwove the mercy and the justice of religion's truth in the letter of the laws of Christian States, and causing common obligations to be respected by each of the separate States of Christendom, it became the source of International Law.—It took from war many of its worst characters—limited its frequency—and regulated the conditions, and established the forms by which it should be made. Thus was the influence of the Church maintained by its wisdom and its uses, and in spite of the growing corruption in that Church's faith and practice, men continued to revere an institution which in a temporal sense continued to fulfil

a portion of those duties which conferred on it the title of **MOTHER.**

Now let us mark the progressive stages through which the Church has declined!—Originally the community was divided into two parts—the clerks and the laity—then the church fell to be one of three estates,—then the estates as constituent portions of the realm ceased to possess their value and to perform their functions.—The Commons gaining in strength, by change in taxation, the weight of the Church was thrown into the House of Peers, and the Church destroyed as a co-efficient portion of the Government, *whose sanction as that of a body was necessary to the enactment of every law.*

In the House of Peers at first spiritual barons constituted a third of the body, (Lay Peers 100, Spiritual Peers 50). In the further progress of decline, the House of Peers came to be composed no longer of the great holders, but was filled with nominees of changing cabinets, while the spiritual members were reduced to one half of their original number, and in that body so degraded from a third, the spiritual Peers now constitute scarcely more than a seventeenth part, (26 to 462).

Thus has the Church from the position of the first of two estates fallen to a fraction of a chamber, the authority of which has perished in having lost all control over the public expenditure; and at the present day by admitting that it is not for spiritual Peers to take part in temporal affairs, the inutility of the Church is established from the evidence of its own lips, and danger even accrues by its extreme dereliction of duty, to the very body with which it is now associated. So that the decay it has undergone, as it has ceased to understand the public interests, must lead us back to the previous conclusion—that it was by understanding them that it had grown great.

But independently of the obligation on which temporalities are held, independently of the conditions of the constitution and the enactments of the laws of the land, independently of the prompting and reproach of historic reminiscences, there are other considerations which make the knowledge of public affairs a duty to the Church, and which constitute that duty the most solemn that can weigh upon the conscience of man, as the most important that can belong to the members of a community.

Every Churchman is a citizen—he was a citizen before he accepted of holy orders. It belongs to no man to renounce the bonds which attach him to his native land, the allegiance that binds him to his Sovereign, the duties that associate him with his fellows. Every office must exist in obedience to the laws of the

land, and the acceptance of an office cannot absolve, but the more bind men to the performance of their duties as citizens.* If there were an office that required men to cease to be citizens, that office would itself be the destruction alike of law and of society, and it would be a crime for any man to accept it.

Churchmen are therefore citizens—citizens in the free State of England; and as well might a Churchman deny the obligations of a father or of a son, as those of a citizen!

It is the duty of a citizen to understand the condition of his country, to possess the knowledge of these things, through ignorance of which men are divided at home, to understand these laws, through the disregard of which we suffer wrong from other nations or inflict it. Comparing ourselves with ourselves it may appear an impossible task thus to be a citizen, but looking at other times, this will be found to be the condition of every people which has become great. We know from Holy Writ that desolation is the portion of the State divided against itself, which punishment would not be just if faction were not criminal. And what is faction but error respecting public affairs, from which a citizen must be free?

But Churchmen have not only to be citizens, they have to make citizens of other men, teaching them the way, and walking before them.

The Church—first citizen—is then Teacher, it makes citizens by teaching men to be just.

The evidence of the Church's usefulness is to be found in the life and character of its flock.—Does that flock do justice and love mercy? Is it moved with brotherly affection? Is it one that executes justice, shielding the weak, resisting the oppressor? Is it one that detests violence and rapine, and turns away from blood? No! this people is a house divided against itself, but it rises as one man to do wrong against the Stranger.—Its hand is swift to shed blood, and it exults in its transgression, and no words of rebuke have been heard against the iniquities of earthly rulers from the Ministers of the God of Justice. They were silent in the face of the crimes of power. They bore no message to their Sovereign from the King of Kings, and they denounced no judgment and no retribution on a generation of evil doers, they had not taught justice, they could not denounce transgression.

The State has conferred on the Church the office of teaching men. By accepting this office the Church accepts the guardianship of the destinies of this empire.† Our guilt when we are criminal,

* Chatham pointed out the attempt to force a duty on Military Officers, independent of their duties as citizens, as sufficient alone to destroy England.

† The Church retains the entire control of the education of the public schools.

our suffering when unfortunate, are therefore sine laying at that Church's door. The Church has failed when the nation is guilty of crimes; the Church fails when it does not denounce those that are committed. And by what means can it resist that which is wrong in individuals when its silent sanction is given to acts of the state that render base and criminal each separate member of the community?

But the Church, *Citizen and Teacher*, is invested with still more solemn rights and charged with still loftier duties—It is PREACHER—Preacher of the Christian Faith—that faith the wondrous mystery of which is founded upon Justice—a sacrifice to unite justice with mercy,—a faith teaching that nothing is truly terrible but guilt, and that no guilt can be redeemed without sacrifice,—a faith not resting in signs and forms, but teaching us that the tree is to be known by its fruit.

The faith of Christ when preached to men was moreover accompanied with a temporal promise and an earthly covenant,—that covenant was good-will between men,—that promise was peace upon earth,—there can be no peace without justice and no justice without judgment; and what is judgment but knowledge? It is only when the Church teaches to be just, and to know, that that promise can be kept and that covenant fulfilled. Then it is that Justice and Peace have kissed each other. But when the Church has neither taught Justice nor denounced crime then is the promise of the faith broken. When a State has rushed into war without cause, if it contain citizens or christians, they will resist and denounce the crime. If there has been then no resistance and no denunciation, then has there ceased to be within it either a citizen or a christian,—and the Church that has not taught its flock to be citizens, has not taught its flock to be believers. Judging of the tree, as we are told to judge,—by the fruit, we must hold such a Church not to be the Church of Christ, nor such a flock worthy of His name.

The Church holds property on the condition of performing their part in the government of the land.

The Church is composed of citizens whose duty it is to understand public affairs.

The Church is composed of Christians who have to labour to preserve peace upon earth by preventing wrong.

The Church is a teacher of morals, instructing men in what is just, and thereby fitting them to be citizens.

and the Universities, that is to say of the class of men from which Statesmen and Ministers are drawn, and who constitute, almost exclusively, the two Houses of Parliament.

The Church preaches the Christian faith, instructing men to be just, without which they cannot be Christians.

The Dignitaries of the Church have a seat in Parliament as temporal Barons, and are bound to discharge their duties as such.

Members of the Church make oath, as members of the Privy Council, to advise the Monarch regarding the conduct of those affairs specially intrusted to his care, becoming responsible in their persons, and on their heads, for the just conduct of those affairs which, by the prerogative of the Crown, have been withdrawn from the previous knowledge of the Common Council of the realm.*

If any of these propositions be correct, (and it appears to me that every one of them is indisputable,) he who says that Churchmen have nothing to do with politics, has perverted, to the injury of his reason, the faculties that his Maker has bestowed upon him, and labours, as far as in him lies, to confirm other men in sin, to lead the Church into transgression, and the State to ruin.

I conceive, my Lord, that I have proved the proposition which it has been my endeavour to establish ; and if so, I cannot doubt that every Churchman to whom that proof is presented will be a changed man in regard to all the things, flowing as consequences from the correction of that error, that is to say, as a matter of conscience, he will apply himself to understand the interests of his country—as a matter of commission and charge he will charge upon that nation in its corporate character, and on each individual, crimes that its cruel hands have so lately perpetrated, and are now preparing to repeat—he will make this charge in the Councils of his Sovereign, in the Senate of the land, in the streets, in the lanes,—it will be heard from the Episcopal Thrones as from the Pulpit of the Parish Church. From this duty there is no escape, if Churchmen are really citizens. For this empire there is no safety but in the resumption, by some portion of its people, of the character, both of Christian and of citizen—and who are to resume this character, or to perform this duty, if not those who are commissioned to instruct other men ? If there were any other class of men that could save the State, your long indifference would have made them appear. It is clear, then, there are none—you are the last and the only refuge, and in your decision lies the fate of this empire, and the saving of your own souls. If you have been heedless while we lived in apparent repose, you cannot be so when these gigantic crimes are perpetrated. If these crimes have not urged you to thought or to

* The Cabinet Council is unknown to the British law. The Monarch can act only on and with the advice of the Privy Council appointed to supply the absence of authority in the Crown while Parliament does not sit.

condemnation, disaster surely and retribution will rouse you from your slumbers. Now to events and to retribution is added a human voice calling upon you to awaken and to save. See, then, with what fearful rapidity warnings are gathering around you,—may God grant for you and for us that they be not destined to testify against you when the hour of reckoning shall have come.

Having discharged this solemn duty, I would desire to trespass yet a little longer on your indulgence in order to present to you some considerations connected with the interests of the Church as a body.

It has been the character of all the Churches that separated themselves from the stock of Rome to fix attention too exclusively upon mere points of dogma, and consequently, to induce neglect or disregard of the general character of the acts of the people and its Government; and in this manner they have ceased to act in directing, controlling, or restraining the march of public events, through which, more especially, the character and mind of nations are formed.

The Church of Rome, upon the other hand, retains *this* vast advantage in utility and influence over the whole of the Reformed Churches, that it never did divide or yield its jurisdiction over every part of morals and of human conduct—made no surrender of its rights of counsel and reproof, and neither gave nor suffered to be torn away the power and obligation to give or to withhold the sanction of religion to the deeds of a nation, as well as to the private acts of men. The authority it derived from curbing the passions of sovereigns and of nations, it turned to establish a despotism of its own, and when men broke away from this Church, they confounded the source with the abuse of its power. Before the Reformation the Church of Rome had endeavoured to separate the English Church from the State, dreading its independence and resistance to the Papal See—the Puritans seeing at that time in the connection of Church and State, no control of worldliness by the dictates and teachings of religion, but the misuse of religion to serve the purposes of worldly ambition, denounced that connection, and asserted the dogma that the Church had nothing to do with politics. In these times, the Church of England, breathing a different spirit, repudiated the social aberrations of Puritanism, after they had triumphed over the spiritual despotism of Rome. Of the Churches severed from this original stock, the Church of England alone imposed upon itself the duty, and preserved the functions connected with a Teacher and a Censor of the morals of the State. The Church of England is the only Reformed Church which is a constituent part of the

Government,* but soon following in that downward course of the nation which they had for a while retarded and resisted, they, too, came to share in the corruption against which they had struggled, sunk beneath the sway of forms, narrowing to dogmas the field of their thought and care, and finally abandoned the high function of teaching nations how to live. From the performance of this function, the Church of England could be dispensed by no authority, by no law, by no encroachment of any other portion of the State—from this station it has not been forced, but has itself voluntarily or unconsciously withdrawn. How wonderful that it should not be seen that such an extensive dereliction of its religious and official duty is an entire abandonment of its hold upon existence as a *Church of England*. What energy, what influence can afterwards remain in its other ministrations with such a weight upon its conscience and its character, of unprevented evil, and unreprieved transgressions? With what impaired authority and confidence must not its Ministers proceed to speak of morality in private life, who, placed in Senates and Basilica for the highest purposes and examples, have so far yielded to the worldliness of a mean age, as on occasions of great public crimes, not only to decline the denunciation, but even to consider themselves precluded from the right of judgment?

The Church cannot abandon its duty to the State without becoming obnoxious to the most bitter reproach from those who dissent—Prelates do indeed sit in the House of Lords for the public good—but if they themselves say that they are restrained from taking part in what concerns all—then must they appear to sit there as representing the interests of a body, corporate interests of a religious kind, and consequently to the injury and exclusion of the other religious bodies into which the State is divided. Yet this political abstinence is put forward by the Church with the view of softening asperities, whilst it is obvious that it can only have the effect of aggravating and of justifying discontent.

Had the Bench of Bishops responded to the dying appeal of the Earl of Chatham—had they raised their voice against the injustice perpetrated against our fellow-citizens in America, what would have been the position of the Church, what the position of England? I refer to one out of innumerable instances of opportunities neglected by the Church to make for itself a great, a powerful and beneficial position in the eyes of men. In that instance, for the last time was an appeal made to the Church in a matter of justice, and then were British thoughts for the last time uttered in a British Senate.

At the dark close of the Eastern Empire when the dereliction of

* The Evangelical Church of Prussia is a mere instrument of despotism in the Government's hands within, and of deception without.

its duty by a Church, once that of Christ, had plunged the people into wickedness and brought the State into danger, the measure of wickedness and danger was filled up by the ascetic ambition of that Church to direct the affairs of the State which it had ruined. And this is a symptom of decay which has presented itself in every declining State and in every perishing Faith—a symptom which these latter years have developed in our own land. Sons of the Church, pre-eminent for talent and for learning, have arisen as a new sect claiming for the Church authority over the State, while repudiating the duty of censorship over the acts of the State which the Church of Rome exercised—which the Church of England preserved. In matters of dogma going beyond what the Church deems necessary for salvation—in matters of form restoring those bonds of papal practice from which it has been emancipated. This new sect then presents the ascetism of Puritanism without its freedom, and the despotism of Rome, without its intelligence. While the increasing aberrations of the times call for higher qualities and nobler characters in the Church whose duty it is to control them—the Church evinces in the changes it is undergoing characters no less alarming than are the deeds which have stamped upon the Government the character of crime—upon the people that of infatuation. When these new leaders have been appealed to, to examine and to denounce these crimes, they have replied, “If crimes are committed and if danger threatens it is but just retribution for the wickedness of the times; but with these things Religion has nothing to do.” Hitherto the servants of the Altar had suffered us to err, but they now teach error. Nay, they now teach men that to be religious, they must cease to be dutiful. Those whom they have neglected to make citizens, they now teach to cease to be citizens, in order that they may become Christians!

I have said in the first part of this letter that complication of affairs, that is, confusion of mind, destroys citizenship—if so it destroys Faith—Religious and political duties have been neglected before affairs could be confused—then follow errors—wrongs—losses—injuries and crimes—crimes suffered first, then perpetrated—next comes heedlessness respecting transgression—coldness of all the affections.—Churchmen seeing these things, unable, however, to trace them to their source and thereby correct them through the judgments of men, turn away in disgust saying, We will have nothing to do with the affairs of this World, we are the Citizens of another. Then does sacrifice become easier than obedience, and the collar of ceremonies is substituted for the yoke of duty—they take refuge in words and forms and superstitious observances, from the evidence of the corruption of the flock that they and their predecessors have

taught amiss. When you point out to them that their faith does not cure and that the tree does not bring forth good fruit, they take refuge in their own individual sense of conscientious discharge of that which they mistake for their duty—Was that sense less strong in the breast of the Inquisitor of Spain? Is that sense less strong in the immediate agents of political crimes?

It is when the head becomes sick that the heart faints—when the eye has lost its sight, that the moral feelings decay. When a nation is involved in complications which it cannot unravel, the mist is within the eye, and not before it. Not unravelling, wrong is committed—it is adopted because not understood, and justified because committed. When a nation is brought to be so ignorant as to sin without an intention, then is the value of conscientiousness totally destroyed—then may men be conscientious, yet sinful, and the instinct of conscience comes to be the defence of transgression.

The first fall was the knowledge of good and evil, the second fall is the loss of the power of discriminating between them. Each individual is degraded by every evil act which the community commits. The state sinks altogether, not one just man remaining to testify and accuse. Thus, the two or three men, who, when a nation is heedless or factious, come to decide upon its corporate acts, in respect to other nations, have in themselves the power of changing the character of each individual, and of destroying a people silently and stealthily—not so much by the mismanagement of their affairs, as by the degradation of their hearts.*

What then might not be effected by a man pre-eminent in intellectual powers, and dignified by authoritative station—could such a man be found to grapple with, and to subdue the power of darkness? Then would authority be converted into an instrument for the people's good, and the faculties of a man be destined for a nation's safety.

The external relations of the empire are matters now, from the examination of which no conscientious citizen can escape. Security has vanished; blood is shed and shedding; the hired assassins we have sent forth, have perished by assassin hands. A gulph is before our steps; it is a question between right and wrong; between crime and justice; between life and death.

* Sir R. Peel said, "We must punish on the Affghans the violation of the laws of war;" and every man in England justified to his conscience, crime. Had Sir R. Peel said, "We have been guilty of an awful crime, from which we must cleanse our hands, and purify our souls;" every man in England would have re-echoed his words, and received their impression. The last would have been the words spoken by Sir R. Peel had the Church performed its duty, and taught men to be just; and then the nation would have been saved from dangers without, as well as from guilt within, and by one just sentence would the fortunes of the world have been reversed.

Is the Church to stand by at the altar, at once spectator and sacrifice? Has it no eye to penetrate the mystery of events, and to dispel the gloom of the coming night? Has it no tongue to utter truths which might breathe life again into a perishing empire? Has it no dignitary whose powers and patriotism may struggle while it is yet day, and if he fail and we perish, leave still upon the name of England one ray, amid the darkness of her decline—one son who had performed his duty?

With the highest respect, I have the honour to remain,

Your Lordship's

Faithful and obedient servant,

(Signed)

DAVID URQUHART.

P. S. In Rome the Executive had not the right of peace and war, and it was a religious body that was charged with this office, drew up the statement of the case (*petitio rerum*,) addressed it to the Foreign State, decided on the reply, and if necessary proclaimed the war on the frontiers of the enemy, and announced the solemn event of recourse to arms by setting wide the gates of the Temple of Janus.

In Turkey it is not the Sultan or the Divan that decides on peace and war, but the college of the Ulima.—In the year 1836 the Church of Persia assembled to consider the country's prospects, and deciding that in the gradual advance of Russia or of England their independence must vanish, they considered from which of these they had least to dread and most to hope—they determined that England was juster than Russia, respected more the faith and rights of nations, and they resolved that it was the interest of Persia to seek even the supremacy of England; and they anathematized whoever should lend himself to Russia's designs.

Alas! they knew not that England was but Russia's instrument!

Alas! that to Christian men must be quoted in reproof, the care taken by Pagan and Mussulman churches for the public weal, and the controul they exercised over the passions of men.

ENCLOSURE.

THE WAR IN AFFGHANISTAN.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MORNING HERALD.*

Torquay, Feb. 19th, 1842.

SIR,—The recent intelligence from Central Asia, and the sense of universal sorrow, indignation, and alarm which has been evinced in this land, and the vehement reproach poured forth from India, as from England, upon the administration that planned and executed the invasion of Affghanistan, induce me to recall to your attention a few facts of the past.

At the close of 1838, was not the intelligence of the invasion of Central Asia received with the loudest commendation by all parties in this country? Was it not commended by the Indian press? Was there a single word said in the House of Commons in reproof of it? Was there one question respecting it, or one remark made on the strange position in which the country found itself, of being involved in a war by an authority, acting under the Government, without the opportunity of receiving previous knowledge, or pronouncing a previous opinion—without being consulted, without being informed, and without any special communication upon the subject, even after the war had been declared? Further, was not this war without provocation on the part of the state attacked—without national sympathies and animosities roused to excuse, or account for it? Consequently, notwithstanding the assumption by the Government of the right of declaring war without the knowledge of the nation, and without the forms and usages of civilised people—withstanding that that war was unjust, the nation gave to it its unanimous assent in calmness and deliberation. What right has the nation now to complain? With what face can those who have applauded and approved now censure and condemn that which could have been executed only by their concurrence, and designed only in the certainty of their applause? They, not the Ministers, are responsible for the act,—as they, not the Ministers, will bear its penalty.

Thus is the late Ministry freed from all responsibility resulting from the acts of England in Central Asia—thus does any man charging that Government with responsibility for these acts condemn

* "We insert Mr. Urquhart's letter without adopting all his opinions; his elaborate and remarkable *Transactions in Central Asia from 1834 to 1839*, published two years ago, give him a right to be heard on recent occurrences."

himself for imbecility. The full consent of the nation has been given, not by silence only, but by acclamation—given through its constituted representatives—given in the spontaneous expression of its opinions—given against every circumstance calculated to awake suspicion, and given without an instant's hesitation, or a shadow of inquiry.

It is now, however, asserted that the Duke of Wellington, that the Marquis of Wellesley, that Lord Ellenborough, that Mr. Mountstuart Elphinstone, Sir Alexander Burnes, Sir John McNeill, Sir Henry Willock, &c., that, in fact, all the men having weight and authority by professional character or local knowledge, were averse to this measure, and that some of them even protested against it. What is this measure? War! war, England being the aggressor; the most momentous act that a Government can perform—the most important responsibility that a nation can incur; and for what purpose? Those who protested against such a measure protested against the blackest of crimes and the most monstrous of infatuations. Their protest is unheeded; they sit down in silence. This policy proceeds under the assumption of their concurrence, and after two years, when disasters have overtaken it, when one of those men himself has fallen a sacrifice in the prosecution of those very measures—then is this nation told that this war was protested against; then is it informed that all the authorities in whom it could rely had denounced that war as inexpedient and unjust.

But these men were some of them responsible agents—they were members of Parliament. They now seek to excuse themselves by saying that they objected to the war, and were opposed to it. If they did object they are doubly responsible; and if the late Government carried out its objects in spite of their objection, they, holding their tongues, are but doubly responsible for that Government's acts. The Duke of Wellington objected to this war! It was because the Duke of Wellington supported the late Government that the war was undertaken; and the war, *commenced against his protest by the Ministry he had protested, will be carried on after he has avowed his opposition by the Ministry of which he is the head.*

The late Minister for Foreign Affairs, in the invasion of Afghanistan, must have had the same object as in the rupture with Persia; it was either to oppose or to facilitate the progress of Russia; that these important decisions were taken. Results show that in both Russia's ends were served, and the documents presented to Parliament show that that was the object he had in view. Not understanding this object, how could the statesmen of England resist the design? That was done which they did not even dare to conceive. Whether then they resisted or they concurred, they were merely the instruments of a design and a purpose which was above their comprehension.

Those who are now mentioned as having protested against the recent policy of England in Asia saw this much; they saw that it was absurd to take the proposed means to arrive at the end that was assumed to be desired; they saw that by marching from India towards Russia was not the way to protect India or to resist Russia; they saw that to attack independent states was to convert the friends of England into the allies of Russia; they saw that the setting up of a pretender over an unwilling people was not the way to gain friendly neighbours; they saw that by extending the frontiers of India a thousand miles, security and compactness were not to be given to frontiers already extended; but they did not see that these operations were masks to cover objects unavowed; they did not see that the frontiers of India were to be weakened; that nations were to be made to appeal to Russia against England; that to Russia was to be spared the distance that separated her from India. Yet these intentions and objects are plainly deducible from the events, while at the same time there is in the documents presented to Parliament proof that these were the ends for which this expedition was designed. The failures that have occurred will not teach those who before could not see that the motives assigned for this policy were not the real intentions of the actors; and as the leaders of the conservative party were unable to resist Lord Palmerston's policy, because they could not understand the intention, so now, from the same reason, will they continue to be themselves the responsible agents of his design.

Now let us endeavour to measure the mind of the man who, a member of the British Cabinet, planned this invasion of Central Asia. India is already crippled in resources, with an enormous extent of open and undefined frontiers, with a multitude of doubtful friends surrounding our possessions,—he moves that Government to undertake a war in an unknown region—not to meet any Indian difficulty, or any Asiatic foe, but to tell upon a European Government with which *England was in intimate relations*. The evident expense of tens of millions sterling is before their eyes, against them the opinions of all the leading authorities are arrayed; his party possessing in the House of Commons barely a majority. *In face of all these difficulties his design is planned and executed.* The high authorities that dissent, close their lips—the Governor-General of India assumes the responsibility—the Indian Government rushes into the scheme—the British nation universally applaud, and it is from the very mouth of his opponents that he brings forth the justification of his acts. This man, then, must be different from the other men called statesmen in England.

In the first portion of an exposition of this question, published

two years ago, I have pointed out the source of this policy ; proved it upon the evidence of diplomatic documents ; prognosticated the disasters that would result from this triumph, at that time the subject of universal jubilation ; and announced that England would soon be seen in Persia led back by the hand of Russia. These two results have now been conjointly realised—namely, the commencement of our disasters in Affghanistan, and the commendation by Sir Robert Peel of Russia, for having assisted us to regain our relations with Persia,—these prognostications depending upon the accuracy of the explanations given of conduct which, to this nation was unintelligible, I have now a right to appeal to, in confirmation of the accuracy of the grounds upon which I judged.

The articles that have now appeared in the public press upon this subject express the strongest indignation, but they all reduce themselves to this—this is an unfortunate business ; those who commenced it are very much to blame ; it is very dangerous to go on ; it is impossible to go back—and there the matter ends. Two years ago I told you that your fortunes were fixed in Affghanistan, from which there was no retreat, without an effort which is beyond your moral or intellectual reach. You who are the instructors of public opinion, ought it not to have been your part then to have anticipated what now has been realised, and then to have given to the world the authoritative denunciation of the conduct of the late Government which you now refer to, in justification of your own party—a justification which is the gravest charge that ever was brought against public men—namely, their submission to a policy dishonest, cruel, bloody, and contemptible, not because they were misled, but because, seeing it was base and bad, they tamely submitted and held their tongues. What is now the intelligence of this nation ? All commending at one moment, all disapproving at the next ; one day pouring forth thousands of articles commending a certain treaty, and six months afterwards all equally concurrent in reprobation of it ; now applauding submission to injustice because of their love of peace, and now commending an unjust war because it was a display of energy ! Must not such a state choose blind leaders ? There is but one door of escape—it is that door which every man in his private circumstances, when in doubt or difficulty, opens to himself, and that is an investigation into his affairs. You know not where you are, what may be done, or what is to be feared until you understand what you have been about. Is this country aware that in every other land public affairs are inquired into by the legislative body, if there is one, or understood by the master if there is a Monarch ? Here has England during fourteen years been involving itself in the most wonderful web of diplomatic intricacy ; bringing

to bear upon the events of the world more diplomatic power and action than previously the whole history of mankind exhibits ; the nation itself being wholly ignorant and indifferent to such matters —indifferent until it is involved in the support of crime by the necessity of covering imbecility. Disasters now overwhelm you ; dangers apparent to the simplest eyes glare you in the face. Will you not then cease all thought of judgment or of action until you do that which is requisite for all acts not injurious, and all judgments ~~not~~ criminal ? Demand inquiry, insist upon the fullest, ~~most~~ laborious investigation of the transactions of the Foreign-office. And if you find, as you may, that there has been more than imbecility ; that there has been talent and knowledge at work, there is an easy remedy within your hands at once for restoring the moral tone of this land, and for regaining her position among nations. If you find that one or more men have been criminal, you have it in your power by the punishment of these to save yourselves from being partners in their guilt and victims of their crime. Then will you be extricated from your dilemma in Afghanistan, in Persia, in China, in the United States ; then can you be again the friend and ally of France ; then will the Ottoman Empire revive, and Austria be brought to your side ; and then, above all, will the victims of Russia learn that the British Empire has ceased to be an instrument in her hands for the destruction of the friends of England, of right, and of humanity. Regain what you have lost ; that you never can, but ruin and destruction may thus even yet be averted.

The present Government account for the present position of affairs by referring it to Lord Palmerston's antipathy to Russia, and not one of these men looks back to the year 1829, when Lord Palmerston, then in opposition, urged the Government to support Russia against Turkey, and avowed that he had himself in 1828 led the English Government to justify Russia in her assault upon Persia. In 1831 he comes into office, and instantly declares himself the vehement foe of that power to which his services had hitherto been so undisguisedly devoted. Thus was it that he was enabled to sacrifice to her Poland. This mask is worn down to the end of October 1838, when having served as the pretext for the invasion of Central Asia it is thrown aside. Then avowedly joining Russia, and accepting a treaty publicly sent from St. Petersburg, by that act, ~~as by his apparent change,~~ he breaks the bonds that unite us to France, and establishes the supremacy of Russia at once over those two great empires hitherto united in interests and will to oppose her. Now the Government who succeed to him, justify by that last act *the necessity of their continuing in the policy in which he has involved England.*

"There was a time," say they, "when Lord Palmerston appeared to be hostile to Russia, when it was a pleasure to him to hear anything said against her in the House of Commons, when he provoked his friends even to do so. But then he subsequently changed. He — not we—have bound England to Russia."

His acts were in opposition to each other at different times, and at the same time in different places, and this his successors explain by saying that he had changed! Their own difficulties might have shown them, as the very necessity of giving an excuse proves, that they found it no easy matter to change from one line of foreign policy to another. Lord Palmerston has never changed from his first important act in 1828 down to 1842.

Sir Robert Peel's compliments to Russia are represented as an adroit cajolery—Lord Aberdeen's expressions to France are represented as putting a fair face on what at the moment was inevitable, but which may afterwards be changed. They justify their smiling falsely upon Russia by the fear in which they stand for France, and they justify their benignant inclinations to France, by the alarm in which they are placed with respect to the United States. Advantage will in like manner be taken of any unjust intentions or disposition of the United States to gain for her diplomatists an equal triumph in having an opportunity of commending them while making surrender to them of British rights, and their friends will justify this again by the state of danger in which we are placed in our relations with Russia and with France. The late Minister has taken care to lead nations into injustice, while at the same time he exasperated them against England by injurious epithets. His successors will confirm that hatred, by converting the hopes to which their accession to power had given rise, into contempt for men who, even in perpetrating evil, have no intention of their own.

I remain, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

D. URQUHART.

P.S.—I subjoin, if you can give space for them, a few extracts from an Analysis of the Diplomatic Documents which has been in print now more than two years.

EXTRACTS FROM "TRANSACTIONS IN CENTRAL ASIA FROM 1834 TO 1839."—Longman and Co.

"England, unless by a complete revision of the past, and by an entire repudiation of the acts committed falsely in her name, is fixed in *Affghanistan until driven from it by defeat*. We have occupied there a position whence we cannot retreat—beyond which we cannot advance—where we cannot fix ourselves on the soil—

where our connections with India are difficult, dangerous, and exhausting—and where every day of our sojourn will augment dissatisfaction, increase the number, and strengthen the hostility of foes.”

* * * * *

“Thus does this invasion unite Afghanistan and Persia against England, does it tend to the union of Dost Mahommed and Kamran Shah. Thus does it tend to the union of Shah Kamran with Dost Mahommed on one side, and the Shah of Persia on the other. Thus does it tend to the union of these with the only maritime prince of Asia, the Imaum of Muscat, whom we have taken care to insult and to injure, and who no more than any other Asiatic potentate can view our expeditionary movements without alarm. The whole spirit of Central Asia is thus raised against us. The local antipathies, the religious animosities, the family feuds that draw lines of such strong demarcation across that region, paralysing its own power of action, and rendering it impervious hitherto to all the bootless efforts of our enemy, are softened down by our act, and over all the fear of Great Britain casts a common shade, and supplies a common motive for union among themselves and for alliance with our foe.”

* * * * *

“But the effect of this robber invasion is not confined even to the wide area of our operations. It traverses the Paropamisus, it crosses the Taurus, it penetrates beyond the Himalaya, and spreads over the wildernesses of Bootan and Thibet. Bokhara, Khiva, Kokan, and Samarcand, resound with indignant denunciation of British aggression, and to England are transferred that hatred and those epithets which hitherto had been reserved for Muscovy.”

* * * * *

“It is in this midnight of your intoxication, that I declare to you an awakening of bitterness—it is at this spring tide of your joy, that I tell you that an ebb of troubles is at hand, a voice of warning and of sorrow I raise, although it be alone; and if its sounds cannot disturb your slumber, and if its sense cannot pierce your breasts, its tone will be preserved, and will sink upon your spirits when they are softened by misfortune.”

THE END.



